

ROUND 2 INTERVIEW
February 17, 2023



COLLIN MORIKAWA (-8)

Q. You're currently leading the field in strokes gained around the green.

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Nice.

Q. That must feel good. With how much you've been working on your chipping, how satisfying is that right now seeing that pay off?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: It's really nice, but you know what, it's a little frustrating just not hitting more greens. You know, coming into the week, the ball-striking still felt fine even after last week. I knew it was going to be a small little fix, just haven't found it. Want to make it a little more stress free and just a little more enjoyable. Fairways are going to be really key, especially how firm these greens are getting. Just when you have a tad bit of downwind when you're in the rough, it's just hard to judge whether it's going to come out spinny or come out a little jumpy.

Q. Was it two chip-ins in three holes?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: It was, yeah, two in three holes but one was a chip, one was a putt. Yeah, the one on 3 was a lot better than the one on 5. On 5 was the putt.

Q. You mentioned 5, you were kind of debating between taking a chip or putting. Can you tell us a little bit more about that moment and then obviously knocking it in?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Yeah, I could describe that shot pretty easily. You just open up a little 60, toe down, land it in the upslope, check up and roll. Just the lie wasn't as good as I wanted and kind of got comfortable with, you know, convincing myself.

Sometimes that's the problem with golf is that you convince yourself that like, oh, man, I know I can do this shot, but in reality like what's the percentage play? It was a terrible putt. It went in, but it probably would have gone to eight, 10 feet. In my head the worst putt I would have hit was five feet. With a great chip shot, it might have looked a lot better, but like I said, you play the percentage plays and kind of just go from there.

Q. Collin, do you find this golf course plays, even though it wasn't a lot of wind, do you feel like this kind of non-prevailing wind, does it play harder with that or with the prevailing?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: You know, I think just with the wind we've seen since Wednesday, Wednesday really dried out the greens, right, and it's been firmer. You've seen bounces that

you just normally don't get. That's kind of made the course really tough.

Granted, this course is I think one of the best courses we have on Tour because it just tests every aspect. You've got to play really good golf out here and you can see that from the scores. But when you have a wind that kind of switches, it helps on a few holes. This morning it's great to play 12, 13 straight downwind. I mean, it makes a huge difference. Jordan and I were joking, I think we hit pitching wedge into 12 today in the morning and we hit 6-iron yesterday. It just shows us when you have a certain wind, it really changes the hole when the fairways are rolling.

Q. How much were you kind of Jonessing to get back here after last year's close call at a place --

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Last year I felt like I was really never in it. I had a really good final round and we made a decent run the last few holes, but I had to do a lot of things to be right just to be able to be in contention. This is a course I've felt like I've always loved, I've had some pretty good rounds out here. Like I've said always, it's just putting together four good ones.

Q. You were pretty frustrated at the end of 2022. This is probably more what you're accustomed to seeing. What's different?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: A lot. I mean, just swing, the kind of work I've been putting in behind the scenes. Just different attitude, just really going out and enjoying it, trying to get back to that first summer when we came out here just eyes wide open just enjoying every single moment and take what you take and whatever happens, happens. That's been a big thing this year. Obviously we got off to a good start last week, just brush it off and move on and here we are.

Q. How do you tell yourself to have that attitude, like how do you physically do it?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: You really look at in a big perspective. For me with the goals I set, it was a tough year because I didn't really hit any of them. We made the TOUR Championship and that's still a very solid year, but other than that we really didn't do much. I think you just step back, take a step back and look at really it's a new season, it's a new year. Even through the fall was a tough stretch. I think after getting married, after going on the honeymoon, spending Christmas with the family, just kind of stepped away from the game a little bit and really just got a fresh start. Obviously it's nice to kind of start in the right direction.

Q. As a SoCal kid, what's your history of coming to this event when you were growing up?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Never.



Q. Really?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Just never made my way out here. To be honest, I really didn't watch much golf growing up. You'd watch Tiger and you'd watch final rounds, but that's about it.

Q. Did you ever play here in college?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I didn't step foot here until the U.S. Am. I had a few rounds earlier in the year because we knew the U.S. Am was coming here, but until then, no.

Q. The folks at Swing Catalyst showed a presentation that you visited them, curious about adding distance. Is that one of the changes you're working on?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Who?

Q. Swing Catalyst? They had you on force plates working on --

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Oh, yeah, forgot about that.

Q. Are you working on adding distance?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: Oh, no, I was just curious like how my kind of weight shifted and all that stuff and is there a way to gain distance. There always is.

But to be honest it was just to have. I was swinging it well at that time, it was just to kind of see. I think that's the biggest thing is I think if you can get your statistics while you're swinging well and while you're playing well, it's always nice to have just in case, hey, maybe this little thing here or there. But there's obviously a lot of variables with golf.

Q. So you're not going to become a bomber?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: No, I wish. Still frickin' hitting it 169, 170 out there. (Laughs.)

Q. You mentioned watching Tiger growing up as one of the few golfers you watched. What is it like sharing the course with him this week and having him kind of close to you in tee times?

COLLIN MORIKAWA: I've been able to play with him before, so at this point it's just nice to see him back, it's nice to see him playing golf.

To be honest, I'm a little shocked there weren't more people out there. I was a little -- it was a little surprising that more people didn't show up to come, especially middle-of-the-day tee times.

But it's always good to play. You know, It's his tournament, he represents the game better than anyone else can and he's the guy that everyone looks up to. We're always listening when he's talking. So it's really good to see him. Looks like he's doing a lot better. Obviously his golf game, it's rusty I think is the right word, but he still has it in it, I know that for sure.

